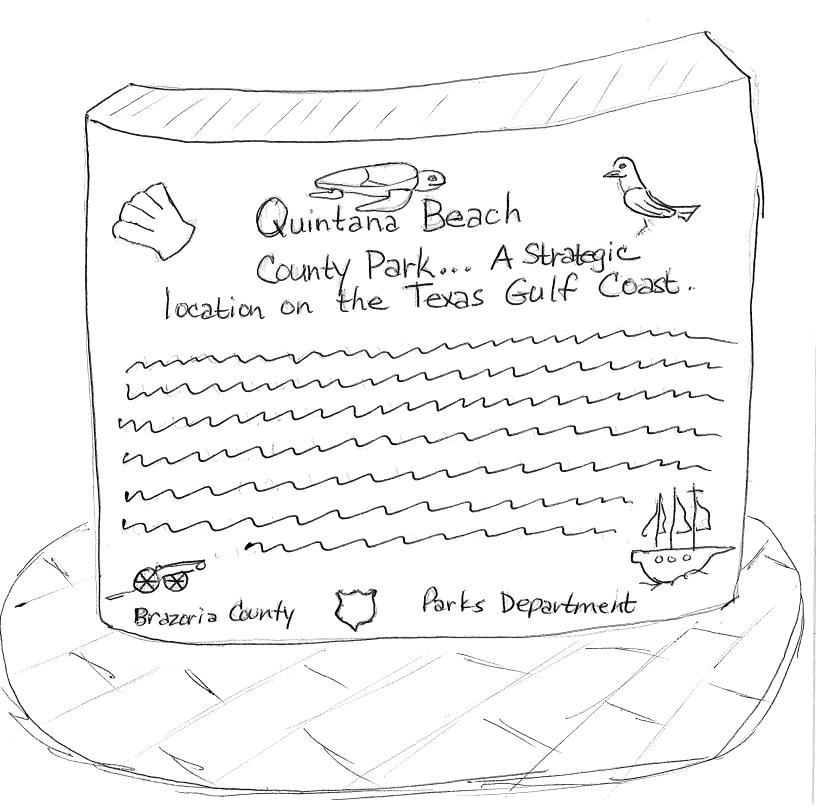


## BACK of Signage



## Quintana Beach County Park... A strategic location on the Texas Gulf Coast.

Quintana Beach has been a key location for many years, even long before it became a popular park destination operated by Brazoria County. For hundreds of years, Native American peoples visited and resided in this area because of its proximity to the Gulf shore and the mouth of the Brazos River. The river not only provided easy access to inland areas for hunting, trade and travel, but the brackish waters of the delta and surrounding Gulf waters proved a fertile fishing ground for many kinds of saltwater fish, oysters, crabs, turtles and other species. Quintana is also home to a vast array of birds; lots of wading and shore birds inhabit the beaches and river wetland areas. Quintana Island also marks the first landfall for colorful migratory birds, which often stop over here during fall and spring trips to and from Central and South America. Today, Quintana's diverse fish and wildlife populations make it attractive for sport fishing, great for finding seashells and one of the best birding places in the U.S.

In the early 1820s, Stephen F. Austin, who would later be called "The Father of Texas," brought Texas' first European settlers into this region as part of Austin's Colony and the original 300 land grants he was given from the Spanish government to settle the northern frontier of Mexico. Once again, Quintana was a critical spot for not only accessing the vast inland spaces of Texas for settlement along the Brazos River, but also became a key outpost in defending Texas during its battles to become an independent nation in the 1830s. Fort Velasco, where famed Mexican General Santa Ana was briefly kept prisoner, was located some two miles west of Quintana. The park's current office building and day-use facility, the Coveny House, and the Seaburn House, were constructed nearby on Quintana Island during the 1860s and are still in use. During World War II, Quintana was a well-armed sentinel along the Gulf Coast against potential invading Axis naval forces; two elevated gun mounds on which Howitzer cannons were placed by the U.S. military are still visible inside the park.

Once the jetties were built on the eastern boundary of Quintana in the early 1900s, the area became a modern, significant shipping port for the city of Freeport, TX. Today, Quintana Beach County Park remains a popular recreation area for visitors from across

Southeast Texas and beyond, and also protects valuable Gulf coast habitat for many marine and Gulf Shore wildlife, such as the endangered Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle.